ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, for millennia, various nations of Indigenous Peoples with their own tribal governments, social organizations and cultural traditions had inhabited the lands, now the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina is home to eight state recognized tribes including the Coharie, Eastern Band of Cherokee, Haliwa-Saponi, Lumbee, Meherrin, Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation, Sappony and Waccamaw-Siouan; and

WHEREAS, the Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation, having their own social, economic, and political systems, dwelt in this region now known as Orange County; and

WHEREAS, in the 18th century, the United States of America was founded on a concept that all people are created equal, yet Native Americans and Alaska Native peoples have struggled and persevered to maintain their identity and their civilization despite centuries of inhumane and unjust Federal policies focused on genocide, removal, and compulsory assimilation; and

WHEREAS, Native Americans have served and continue to serve in the Armed Forces – including the Native American Code Talkers in World War I and World War II – defending the United States and continue to serve at a higher rate than any other ethnic group in the Nation; and

WHEREAS, President Joseph R. Biden signed a Presidential Memorandum committing his Administration to fulfilling Federal trust and treaty responsibilities, respecting Tribal self-governance, and conducting regular and robust consultations with Native American Nations on a range of policy issues; and

WHEREAS, Deb Haaland of the Pueblo of Laguna now serves as United States Secretary of the Interior, becoming the first Native American in United States history to serve in the Cabinet; and

WHEREAS, on August 3, 1990, then-President George H. W. Bush declared November as National Native American Heritage Month with a landmark bill honoring the Tribal People of America, which began in 1976, when Jerry C. Elliott-High Eagle, a Cherokee/Osage Indian, authored Native American Awareness Week legislation; and

WHEREAS, National Native American Heritage Month is a platform for Native Americans to share their culture, traditions, arts, and concepts of life, as well as a time for others to celebrate the myriad of contributions by Native Americans and honor their influence on the advancement of the United States; and

WHEREAS, the theme this year is “Strong Roots in Changing Times” to reflect the resilience of Native Americans throughout the pandemic and continued preservation of their culture and traditions;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Orange County Board of Commissioners does hereby proclaim November 2021 as NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH, and urges all residents to observe this month by participating in activities and ceremonies, to celebrate November 26, 2021 as Native American Heritage Day this month and every month, and to honor the cultures and contributions of Native Americans by committing to freedom, peace, and justice for all.

This 16th day of November 2021.

[Signature]
Renée A. Price, Chair
Orange County Board of Commissioners